

Message Text

SECRET

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70

ORIGIN SS-25

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APPROVED BY P:PHABIB

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L/EUR:JWILLIS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 196890 TOSEC 200208

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU

SUBJECT: REDRAFTED MESSAGE TO BITSIOS

REF: A) SECTO 20090;

-- B) S/S NO. 7616973

1. BELOW (PARA 2) IS A NEW DRAFT OF A SUGGESTED MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY TO BITSIOS INCLUDING LANGUAGE REFERRING TO THE FACT THAT THE SECRETARY DID NOT TELL BITSIOS IN WASHINGTON LAST APRIL THAT HE WOULD CONSIDER TURKISH SEISMIC RESEARCH ON THE GREEK CONTINENTAL SHELF TO BE A PROVOCATIVE ACT. WITH REGARD TO OUR DEFINITION OF "SEISMIC RESEARCH", IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING, AND THAT OF L, THAT THE TURKISH VESSEL IS IN FACT CONDUCTING SEISMIC RESEARCH OVER THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. RECENT TURKISH STATEMENTS HAVE DESCRIBED THE SISMIC'S ACTIVITIES AS "SEISMIC RESEARCH" AND ONE OF THESE SAID: "THE VESSEL WILL TOW A CABLE 3,000 METERS LONG ON THE SURFACE AND 20 METERS DEEP, AND WILL CONDUCT EXPLOSIONS OF SHORT AND SECRET

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LONG DURATION." THOUGH THIS IS SEISMIC RESEARCH, WE UNDER-

STAND IT WILL NOT INVOLVE PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH THE SHELF,
AND IN YOUR MESSAGE TO THE TURKS YOU SEEK CONFIRMATION OF
THIS.

2. --1. BEGIN ORAL MESSAGE: I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR MESSAGE
REGARDING THE REPORT THAT THE TURKISH VESSEL SISMİK I HAS

CARRIED OUT RESEARCH IN THE AEGEAN IN AREAS OVER WHICH
GREECE CLAIMS TO BE ITS CONTINENTAL SHELF AND REQUESTING
OUR INTERVENTION WITH THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO HAVE IT
CEASE ITS RESEARCH OPERATIONS IN THE AREA.

--2. IN YOUR MESSAGE YOU REFER TO OUR CONVERSATION IN
WASHINGTON LAST APRIL AT WHICH TIME YOU SUGGESTED THAT
ACTIVITIES BY THE HORA (NOW SISMİK) OVER THE DISPUTED
SHELF WOULD CONSTITUTE A TURKISH PROVOCATION. OUR RECORDS
INDICATE THAT I DID NOT THEN TAKE A POSITION ONE WAY OR
THE OTHER; AND AMBASSADOR KUBISCH CLARIFIED OUR POSITION
IN THIS REGARD IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER
CARAMANLIS ON JULY 28.

--3. NEVERTHELESS, IN OUR RECENT CONTACTS WITH THE
TURKISH GOVERNMENT WE HAVE URGED RESTRAINT ON THE AEGEAN
ISSUE, JUST AS WE HAVE WITH THE GREEK GOVERNMENT. WE
UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS THE POSITION OF THE TURKISH GOVERN-
MENT THAT RESEARCH BY SISMİK I WOULD NOT AFFECT THE LEGAL
CLAIMS OF EITHER STATE IN THE SHELF AREA. IT IS ALSO
OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT TURKISH RESEARCH IN DISPUTED AREAS
WILL NOT INVOLVE ANY PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH THE SEABED.
ALTHOUGH LEGAL OPINION IS NOT UNANIMOUS IN THIS REGARD,
IT HAS BEEN OUR POSITION THAT SUCH RESEARCH WOULD NOT
NECESSARILY VIOLATE THE RIGHTS OF A COASTAL STATE WITH
RESPECT TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. IN ANY EVENT, I AM
CONFIDENT YOU WOULD AGREE THAT THERE ARE AMPLE MEASURES
GREECE CAN USE TO PROTECT ITS LEGAL POSITION WITHOUT
RESORT TO FORCE, AS FOR EXAMPLE THROUGH A FORMAL PROTEST
OF A KIND YOU HAVE REGISTERED WITH THE TURKS OR THROUGH
INVOCATION OF THIRD PARTY SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES.

--4. IN VIEW OF YOUR REPORT THAT THE SISMİK I HAS
CONDUCTED RESEARCH IN DISPUTED AREAS, I SHALL AGAIN BE IN
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CONTACT WITH THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO URGE RESTRAINT AND
TO CONFIRM OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT NO PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH
THE SEABED IS TAKING PLACE. I WILL ALSO URGE THE TURKISH
GOVERNMENT, AS I DO THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, TO FIND THE
MEANS TO SETTLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY
IN THE AEGEAN THROUGH NEGOTIATION OR THE INTERNATIONAL
COURT, SINCE IT IS ONLY THROUGH A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF
THESE ISSUES THAT CONFRONTATION OF THE KIND NOW TAKING

PLACE CAN BE AVOIDED AND THE RIGHTS OF BOTH PARTIES
ASSURED. END ORAL MESSAGE. HABIB

SECRET

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